

Home News

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1993 3

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Basma to inspect Mafrag

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday will visit Mafrag governorate to inspect social development services to the villages of Um Niam, Buweida, Hawandeh, Manshieh and Sirhan. She will be accompanied by Minister of Social Development Amin Awad Mashaqbeh.

Prince Abdullah visits PSD

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Bin Al Hussein Saturday called at the Public Security Department (PSD) and met with Major General Abdul Rahman Al Udwani, the department director, in his office. The Prince also met with senior police officers and the PSD inspector general.

Arab Geographers thank Crown Prince

AMMAN (Petra) — Saturday participants in the Arab meeting on Geographic Information and Remote Sensing which concluded in Amman last week sent a cable to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, thanking him for his patronage of their meeting and his directives. They also voiced their pride in Jordan's leadership and people and thanked them for the hospitality they were accorded during their stay in Amman.

Abu Jaber meets with PLO's Abed Rabbo

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber Saturday met with member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee Yasser Abed Rabbo who conveyed to him a message addressed to His Majesty King Hussein from Palestine leader Yasser Arafat. The message deals with the developments in the Middle East peace process. Dr. Abu Jaber and Mr. Abed Rabbo exchanged views on the outcome of the ninth round of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and preparations for the next rounds. The meeting was attended by the Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan.

Minister says Saudi government providing all pilgrims' needs

JEDDAH (Petra) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi, who is at present in Saudi Arabia at the head of the Jordanian pilgrimage delegation, Saturday met with his Saudi counterpart, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Abu'l Wase'. The two ministers discussed issues related to the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, as well as facilities and services extended by the Saudi government to the pilgrims. Sheikh Tamimi said following the meeting that all official delegations leading pilgrims in Saudi Arabia received from the Saudi government all their needs and demands.

Valley office begins 8-day health education

NORTH SHUNEH, The Jordan Valley (Petra) — The northern Jordan Valley district Social Development Department Saturday embarked on a health and social education programme in various parts of the district. The Director of the department said the programme, which is being implemented in cooperation with the Mother and Child Care Centres in the region, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and charity societies, will deal with issues ranging from social integration to begging. He added that the eight-day programme will also include lectures which will shed light on the role of charitable societies, their purposes and goals in the society, the objectives of the National Aid Fund (NAF), disabilities, child care, nutrition and birth control.

Amman education office honours King

AMMAN (Petra) — The Greater Amman First Education Department Saturday organised a celebration marking the 40th anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's assumption of his constitutional powers and Independence Day, which falls on May 25. The celebration included dances and songs, poetry recitals and theatrical shows. In observance of the two occasions, the Kufraja Sports Club in Ajloun district also organised a celebration which included speeches, national songs and dances and sports events.

Zarqa honours King with exhibits

ZARQA (Petra) — An exhibition of books and handicrafts was opened Saturday at the Al Hashimiya Vocational Training Centre in Zarqa. The exhibition, held in observance of the 40th anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's assumption of constitutional powers, includes cultural, religious, scientific, economic and political books, in addition to photos of King Hussein's meetings with heads of state and visits to Jordanian cities and army units. The exhibition also includes works by students at the centre. Another exhibition of plastic arts was opened Saturday in Musab Basic School in Ramtha city.

Birth control group advises residents of Sahab

SAHAB (Petra) — A mobile clinic operated by the Jordanian Birth Control Society Saturday organised a free medical advice day in Sahab. Lecturing doctors spoke to the local residents about the importance of birth spacing and child diseases.

Egyptian petrochemical team tours industries

AMMAN (Petra) — A team of workers representing the petrochemical industries in Egypt Saturday toured several industries and met with union leaders. The team, whose members will later hold talks with Jordanian workers union leaders, were also accompanied on tour of archaeological sites.

Engineers to attend water workshop in Libya

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) will participate in a workshop on water sources in the Arab World scheduled to start in Tripoli, Libya Monday. The JEA will be represented at the three-day workshop by engineers Mohammad Abu Taha and Ali Al Khalil. The workshop, according to Mr. Abu Taha, will discuss water projects in the Arab World, dams, water pumping projects and the preparation of an atlas on water in the Arab World. He said the Jordanian delegation will submit to the workshop two working papers on water sources and uses, and the water recycling projects in Jordan.

Jordan to attend ILO conference in Geneva

AMMAN (Petra) — The General Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions will take part in the meetings of the 88th International Labour Organisation (ILO) conference which will open in Geneva June 1. The conference, expected to last for three weeks, will discuss union freedoms, workers' movements and international conventions on labour-related issues.

Yemeni envoy says Jordan's democratisation is a model to be followed in Arab World

AMMAN (Petra) — Yemeni Ambassador to Jordan Abu Ali Lahham Saturday described the democratisation process in Jordan as a model that should be followed in the Arab World, expressing his hope that the Arab states will take more steps in the direction of democracy on the basis of political freedom, pluralism, respect for human rights and public participation in decision-making.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, on the occasion of the third anniversary of the unification of Yemen, Mr.

Arab-German trade group chief outlines ways to boost commerce

AMMAN (Petra) — Luthar Spaeth, head of the Arab-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Saturday met with officials from the Jordanian public and private sectors and called for further bolstering of Jordanian-German trade and industrial cooperation.

Speaking at a meeting with Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour, Mr. Spaeth said the two countries can boost their trade balance through joint investments in small and medium size industrial projects and an increase in reciprocal flow of national products.

He also said that Jordan and Germany can promote cooperation in the transfer of technology and in economic fields.

Regarding the Middle East, Mr. Spaeth said Germany supports efforts for the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Spaeth, who arrived here Friday on a three-day visit to Jordan, reviewed with Dr. Ensour bilateral trade and prospects for boosting industrial trade and scientific and cultural cooperation.

Dr. Ensour outlined the Kingdom's incentives to encourage foreign investors and urged Germany to import more Jordanian national products to help adjust the balance of trade which, he said, is heavily in favour of Ger-

many.

The minister said that this can be done through raising Bonn's imports of Jordanian phosphate and potash.

Referring to developments in the past years, Dr. Ensour said the standard of living in Jordan took a turn downwards as a result of the wars and the sudden waves of expatriates and migrants arriving in the Kingdom.

But he voiced Jordan's gratitude to Germany for helping to support the Kingdom's national economy over the past decades.

Under agreements signed in 1960 upgraded in 1974, Germany and Jordan concurred on economic cooperation and the protection of investors' capitals in either country.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade said Jordan last year imported JD 153,518,500 worth of German products and sold Germany JD 1,005,400 worth of Jordanian products.

Discussions of Jordanian-German trade and economic cooperation also took place at a meeting between Mr. Spaeth and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker in the presence of Dr. Ensour and Khalid Abu Hassan, the president of the Amman Chamber of Industry.

The two sides reviewed ways to promote industrial and trade cooperation and areas where Jordan can benefit from German expertise in light and heavy in-

dustry, as well as in communications and health fields.

Mr. Abu Hassan met earlier with the German official who praised German-Jordanian economic relations over the past three decades.

Dr. Spaeth stressed that he intended to gather more information on Jordanian industry and the Kingdom's investments and economic system.

Urging the private and public sectors in Jordan to promote German-Jordanian cooperation in economic fields, Dr. Spaeth said Jordan was eligible to play a prominent economic role in the region because of its proximity to Europe and its central geographical location.

Mr. Spaeth pledged that the Arab-German Industrial and Commercial Chamber of Industry will play a major role in providing Jordanian exporters with information and data about European markets.

He urged the Amman Chamber of Industry to dispatch a team to Germany soon, to follow up on the present discussions and to examine German and European markets.

Following the initial talks, Mr. Spaeth and his delegation gathered with Jordanian business leaders for the first workshop during which they conducted a general review of local and German markets, prospects for exporting Jordanian products

to Europe, questions related to standards and specifications and other economic and trade-related matters.

Mr. Spaeth met later with Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz and discussed economic relations.

They reviewed ways to encourage German companies to set up joint ventures with Jordanian business leaders in the Kingdom and Jordan's exports to Germany.



HIS MAJESTY King Hussein Saturday receives at the Royal Court Luthar Spaeth, head of the Arab-German Chamber of Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour, President of the Amman Chamber of Industry Khalid Abu Hassan and President of the Amman Chamber of Commerce Mohammad Asfour were present at the audience (Petra photo)



HER ROYAL Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Saturday opens an exhibition of paintings by plastic artist Rafiq Al Lahham at the Royal Cultural Centre. The exhibition, entitled "The 40th Exhibit," includes 80 paintings depicting human suffering, nature and Islamic manuscripts and ornamentations. The opening ceremony of the exhibition, which will last until the end of the month, was attended by Minister of Culture Mahmoud Al Samra. Mr. Lahham, who is one of the founders of the Jordanian Plastic Artists Association and the Arab Plastic Artists Federation, has won several awards, including the 1991 State Arts Award and the 1992 Plastic Artists Award. He was presented in 1981 with the Golden Shield and Medal of the Arab Plastic Artists Federation (Petra photo)



A busy day at one of Jordan's health clinics (file photo)

UNICEF praises Jordan's efforts in child care, health protection

AMMAN (J.T.) — UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) Saturday praised Jordan's efforts in child care and child health protection noting that the Kingdom was among the first few countries to endorse the 1991 United Nations Convention on Children's Rights.

UNICEF senior official Nihad Kanawati told a seminar on child care, organised by the agency at the Amman Marriott Hotel, that through its diligent efforts over the last two decades, Jordan has been able to sharply reduce its infant mortality rates.

Jordan has been able to make major achievements in health areas despite difficult political and economic circumstances facing the country since 1989 and the sudden increase in its population from the forced return of more than 300,000 Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates from the Gulf placing additional burden on the health services, said Ms. Kanawati, UNICEF's senior programme officer.

According to Mamoun

level of nutrition among Jordanian children under five years of age.

The survey was conducted on a random sample of 800 children from Jordan's various governorates, according to UNICEF sources.

Maabreh of the Health Ministry, the survey was conducted in order to compare nutritional levels among children with international standards and also to determine the social and economic effects on the general health and nutrition of Jordanian children.

The health ministry announced recently that infant mortality rates dropped in Jordan from 67 per 1,000 live births to 37 per 1,000.

Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh addressed the session, noting that malnutrition was plaguing 20 per cent of the world's population, mainly women and children.

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Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh addressed the session, noting that malnutrition was plaguing 20 per cent of the world's population, mainly women and children.

The joint committee decided to hold another meeting in July in Amman, according to Mr. Awad.

He said the committee also decided to study proposals prepared by a task force that met in Amman in December last year, pertaining to the formation of a follow up committee to pursue the implementation of agreements, said Mr. Awad.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.

Established 1975

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
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Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Now Israeli referendums override international laws?

THE ISRAELI people could very well be divided over the issue of withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. The radicals among them would contend that the West Bank and Gaza are parts of "greater Israel" and the Palestinians living there are aliens who ultimately should be evicted and expelled. The moderates would not mind pulling out of the occupied territories, or most of them, and would like to see the Palestinians gain their national rights. That, however, does not give the Israelis the licence to decide the future of the occupied territories either in a referendum or otherwise. International law that overrides all other national laws or national will has resolved that Israel should withdraw from the occupied territories.

The Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, might hope that by holding a referendum the Israelis might say yes to withdrawal. That might be the result and it might not. But the fact remains that such a referendum is illegal from an international point of view. There is no pretext other than Israel's claim that the occupied Palestinian lands were "disputed lands." And even and when that is the case, it is not the Israelis — the occupiers — who should be polled whether or not they should withdraw, but the Palestinians, the owners of the land and its inhabitants for hundreds of years. Of course it is more than obvious that the Palestinians want the Israeli occupation to end and it has cost them dearly in blood to get their message through to the Israelis and the entire world. It is therefore highly immoral of Rabin to intend to poll the Israelis on the issue.

Mr. Rabin does not need a mandate to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza, the mandate is embodied in U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 and all the other pertinent resolutions including 181, which originally partitioned Palestine between Palestinians and Jews. It is therefore incumbent on Palestinians, Arabs and the U.N. to oppose such an Israeli move.

What Mr. Rabin should be doing, for which he got a mandate from the Israeli people, is pressing ahead for peace and for complete withdrawal. This last chance for peace need not be wasted for the sake of internal Israeli politics. The interests of the Israeli people and the peoples of the whole region do not depend on who is in power in Israel. Nor does it depend on the narrow interests of the Israelis themselves. The choice of peace should not be left for radicals, either on this or that side. What is needed are bold policies and bold decisions. The march for peace has already been started. It should not be derailed for whatever reason.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

EVERY TIME the Palestinians and the other Arabs try to increase efforts to reach peace, Israel steps up its repression in the occupied Arab lands and hardens its position at the negotiating table, said Al Dastour daily Saturday. To be noticed also, is the fact that Israel's malpractices trend to intensify during the peace sessions, something which was particularly apparent during the ninth round of talks, to whose failure contributing, the paper noted. It seems that Israel still lacks understanding of the fact that violence and oppression can only breed violence, frustration and desperation, said the paper. The Israelis have already tried their futile malpractices in a bid to stifle the intifada, but these practices have all ended in failure, said the daily. Nothing short of respect for the Palestinian people's human rights and the right to self-determination can satisfy the Palestinians or end the intifada, added the paper. Israel's present policies, which are backed by its allies, do not help end the violence in the region, and Israel's intransigence at the negotiating table can by no means bring Israel closer to the Arab states, stressed the paper. It said that the Palestinian people would not stop the intifada as a price to be paid for peace which does not take into account an exchange for land for the full implementation of U.N. resolutions on the Palestine problem.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dastour daily commented on a statement by the head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, noting that the man has justly demanded a suspension of the Arab-Israeli talks as they are heading nowhere. Being a Gazan, besieged like his fellow Gazans by the Israeli troops and living a miserable life due to the continued repression and occupation, Dr. Abdul Shafi's demands are justified as they reflect his deep frustration, said Taher Al Udwani. The writer said that while the Arabs will continue discussions on whether to participate in the next session, once the Eid Al Adha is over, the U.S. would be exercising new pressures on the Arab governments to return to the negotiating table with Israel and making new empty promises to them. It would be most reasonable for the PLO to respond favourably to Dr. Abdul Shafi's demands simply because the nine sessions have all proved futile, the writer said. It has to be mentioned that by its previous consent to participate in the talks, the PLO had exposed itself to severe criticism by its friends and opponents alike, said the writer. He said that should the PLO go to the 10th session, it would no doubt risk losing Palestinian people's support, as long as the head of the delegation is demanding a suspension of the negotiations, the writer said. Such a call is worth considering by the PLO leadership because Dr. Abdul Shafi is in a position to know if the talks were achieving progress or not, the writer pointed out. He said that since the ninth session was a fiasco, thanks to the U.S. empty and false promises, there is no reason for any Arab party to involve itself in further discussions with Israel.

When peace is water under the bridge

By Robert Fisk

THE LITANI River, southern Lebanon — four Lebanese soldiers guard the bridge over the Litani. Beneath its concrete supports and below the wreckage of the iron railway bridge the Israelis destroyed in 1976, there froths one of the great rivers of antiquity, mentioned in the books of the Egyptian 19th Dynasty, known to the ancients as the Leontes, muddy and dark, wasting itself in the Mediterranean. Waste being the operative word.

In spring the Litani is a torrent, pouring through the valley below Beaufort Castle, sloshing through the front lines of Israeli occupation troops and Lebanese soldiers, racing through the orchards north of Tyre before exhausting itself in the sea. No wonder the Israelis watch this river with so much desire; no wonder the Lebanese army guards it so jealously. In any Middle East peace treaty, the name Litani will be almost as important as the signatures.

Already its flow and precipitation is being calculated by the nations that may benefit from its waters in the aftermath of peace. Lebanon produces 10 billion cubic metres of water a year, enough to satisfy threefold the total annual water deficiency of Syria, Jordan and Israel. Lebanon's water, in the opinion of one of the country's economists, Marwan Iskandar, represents the single most important potential for technical cooperation between Arabs and Israelis if — if their 45-year conflict comes to a formal end.

It is easy to identify the economic consequences of peace. Syria could sell oil and gas to Israel at world market prices, Israel could sell its agricultural technology to Syria, while a future Palestinian state — if that is what is to be born — may develop a fishing industry in Gaza linked to a new agricultural and industrial base in the West Bank, not to mention (as Israelis already know) a cheap labour market. The World Bank, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are already working on plans for the cooperation of Israel with the three remaining frontline Arab states and a Palestinian "entity".

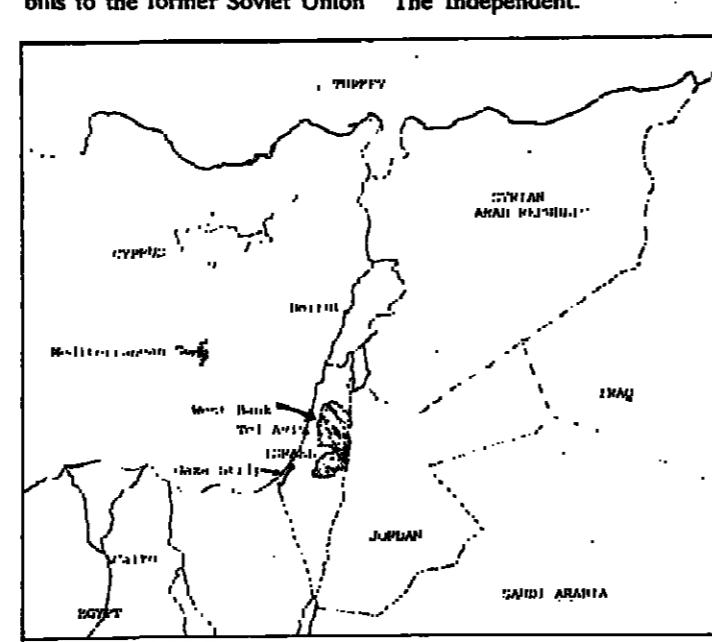
The optimism that drifts across from the peace talks in Washington — from the Israelis, Jordanians and Syrians rather than the Palestinians — may be illusory. Whatever concessions the Israelis appear to make in Washington, their army's repression in Gaza — and their previous covert assistance to the fundamentalists in an attempt to counter Yasser Arafat's influence — is fueling a civil war between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Islamic resistance movement Hamas, a conflict that might provide a convincing excuse for refusing to leave the West Bank.

When Israel retreated from the Chouf mountains and then Sidon, its arming of both Christian and Druze militias produced just such a civil war in Lebanon. And without a Palestinian settlement, there will be no peace in the Middle East, no matter how many signatures are scribbled across a treaty.

Nevertheless, it may be time for all sides to look at the economic opportunities and disappointments peace would bring. For Israel, an end of the Arab boycott — which Israel claims has cost it more than \$40bn. For Palestinians, an end to oppression and the start of international Palestinian trade.

For Israel and Syria, a massive reduction in the military — 20 per cent of Israel's population is currently in the armed forces; 10 per cent of Syria's. The massive foreign debts of Israel (\$34bn), Syria (\$20bn) and Jordan (\$10bn) are largely defence costs. The United States will probably exercise its economic generosity by wiping out Israel's debt, and Syria may get away with repaying only half its bills to the former Soviet Union

which raises the dark suspicion that if the Arab regimes at peace with Israel were "de-Islamised", there might be the makings of a future Arab-Israeli alliance. Who against whom? Is that what the "peace" talks in Washington are leading to? — The Independent.



Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Imposition of sales tax is inevitable

After the successful encounter on Jordan Television with Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh, aired last Tuesday evening, the outspoken opponents of the sales tax, who filled the atmosphere with their noise in the name of the poor, the limited-income groups, the local industries and the consumers, found themselves in a real embarrassing situation similar to a political and intellectual scandal.

Mr. Jardaneh is known to be extremely truthful. Even his policy opponents never doubted his credibility. What he said in the interview was very simple and straight forward. Following are the main points:

— The sales tax is not a new or additional tax, it is merely an improved and reformed version of the consumption tax which is currently in force.

— Replacing the current consumption tax by the sales tax will not cause any net increase in the tax burden payable by the people; if anything, the end result is a net reduction.

— The application of the sales tax and the abolishing of the consumption tax will not result in any increase in the cost of living index or, for that matter, cause a net rise in the level of prices in the country.

— The sales tax will expand the base of the tax to include some 26 new commodities, most of which are nonessential or luxurious. Only seven of them are manufactured locally. Examples: Artificial flowers and window umbrellas.

— The bulk of the commodities traded in the market will not be influenced by the application of the sales tax, because the sales tax which will be charged to them is exactly the same as the consumption tax, no more, no less. The prices of some of the remaining commodities, (luxury goods) will rise slightly while the prices of others, (basic goods) will decline. The number of commodities that will become cheaper is more than that of commodities which will become more expensive. The overall end result is in favour of the consumers, especially the poor and the limited-income groups.

— A number of commodities which are now subject to tax will be exempted as soon as the sales tax law becomes operative. The

prices of such commodities will decline. They are all basic goods, essential to the poor and low-income groups. They are mostly related to food, medicine, baby supplies and students' amenities.

— There will be no change as far as imports are concerned. Both the present consumption tax and the sales tax which will replace it have the same rates and are applicable to the same base, i.e., the cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value, thus the price of imported goods will not be altered.

— What is new for the national industry are the facilities and advantages produced by the draft law of the sales tax to replace the stringent and complicated procedures and heavy fines under the current consumption tax.

— The passage of sales tax law is urgent and could not be deferred because it is an integral part of the economic adjustment programme, without which we will have to take alternative fiscal measures, much harsher than the sales tax. We may find ourselves without a programme if the IMF decided that Jordan defaulted and did not abide by the programme. Such an eventuality will bring us back to square one as far as the crisis of foreign indebtedness and shortage of foreign exchange is concerned. We shall also lose the soft loans and outright grants, which are badly needed, at least in the coming five years and which are now flowing to the treasury from the industrialised countries and the international institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF.

Of course, the minister should have addressed the public earlier, to convince the people and have them on his side, instead of leaving the public opinion to be misled by uninformed demagogic politicians and columnists who were able to mobilise public opinion against the sales tax based on false information.

After the convincing facts regarding the sales tax, all political parties, unions, and writers which raised their loud voices against the sales tax are required to apologise for the noise and distortion they have created. The government should also go ahead and issue the sales tax law and protect the country's economic achievements, including fiscal and monetary stability, high investment rate and unprecedented economic growth.

Bosnian Serb army chief didn't want to be soldier

By Paul Holmes
Reuter

PALE, Bosnia — General Ratko Mladić, the Bosnian Serb army chief Washington has named as a potential war criminal, reaches across the table and offers



Ratko Mladić

unzipped a camouflage coat and the jerkin beneath. "Look, I'm not armed now," he said.

His words are stunning in the context of Bosnia, where Gen. Mladić's artillery has brought death and destruction to the besieged Bosnian capital Sarajevo and suffering to the Muslim enclaves of Zepa and Srebrenica. "I regret that any civilians have been killed and suffered on our side or on their side," Gen. Mladić said when asked about the Serb onslaught. The blame, he said, lay with Muslims.

"Would you tolerate it if I attacked your family? If I went to your home with a Kalashnikov, would you just sit back and do nothing if I killed your family?" he asked.

He is untroubled by the talk of a possible trial before a U.N. war crimes tribunal.

"I don't have anything to be ashamed of, not in my life and not in this war," he said. "I defend my people. To defend one's people is the highest honour and duty."

Ratko Mladić grew up alone. His father, a fighter with Tito's World War II partisans, was killed fighting Nazi German occupiers in 1945 when Mladić was two. He left home and a sister and his mother, to whom he is devoted, at an early age for boarding school in Belgrade.

Despite his ability to breathe fire against those he sees as his enemies, Gen. Mladić can be charming and witty. He blames the media and their "monstrous lies" for the world's sympathy for the Muslims and his image as a butcher of Bosnia.

He says he does not hate Muslims and Croats and has little time for religion despite regarding Bosnia's war as a step on the West's way to diminishing orthodoxy Russia "as much as possible" as I did to Srebrenica and Zepa".

Though he says he respects Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance, co-authors of the peace plan, he is dismissive of attempts by foreign politicians to pacify the Balkans.

The first time he attended peace talks in Geneva, he said, he regarded Mr. Vance and Lord Owen as Gods. The next time he realised half the officials there "don't even know where Bosnia is".

"The third time I went I knew I was master," he said, referring to his knowledge of the military situation on the ground in Bosnia.

LETTERS Brevity reads better

To the Editor:

I do not subscribe to Mr. K. A. Hluch's point of view, expressed in his letter to the editor (Cardinal points, Jordan Times, May 20-21, 1993), regarding Rami Khouri's column of May 11; and though I do not intend to discuss or analyse any of the two gentlemen's ideas, I openly and shamelessly declare that I usually share Mr. Khouri's opinion on the said subject, in its broad lines at least.

I had started reading Mr. Hluch's letter with interest; that is up to the last two paragraphs. What began as reasonable and acceptable criticism, presented with plausible arguments for the reader to accept or reject, ended in a cheap form of mockery with personal, offensive insinuations against Mr. Khouri.

True, democracy means Mr. Hluch is free to write in any form or style he chooses. I just want to tell him that the way he ended his letter made the whole of it much less believable. I just wish he did without the last two paragraphs.

Jean-Claude Elias,
Amman.

Tolerance on equal grounds

To the Editor:

Aboard a Royal Jordanian flight, in mid-air, I read with interest the article written by Zuleikha Abu Rishieh about religion and nationalism (Religion and nationalism could forge a healthy nation, Jordan Times, May 15, 1993). Until I read the article, I did not know that religion, especially Islam, could be divided into "pure" and "political," and that the "pure" one which the writer believes to be the correct type, is the one which is practised by her mother and which caters for the needs of the spirit and her relationship between man and his creator.

Such a description of religion is not only secular but is also untrue for most religions, especially Islam. A glance through the Koran or, for this purpose the Bible, clearly reveals that these book of documented revelations do not only cater for man's relationship with God but also with his fellow human beings.

It is man who, for reasons of belief, disbelief or special interests, decides to take some or all of the teachings of religion.

The secular movement in the West was in fact responsible for the reinterpretation of religion in favour of excluding it from say in the running of peoples' mundane affairs. It is also true that secularists in many parts of the Muslim World have attempted to do to Islam what their counterparts did to Christianity in the West.

If a certain segment of the community adopts a secular interpretation of religion and struggles, using peaceful and democratic means, to uphold, enforce or spread such an interpretation and resorts to political power to ensure the accomplishment of its objective, why should opponents of this adoption and implementation of religious teachings, be deprived of the right to do the same, and have political aspirations — just like the secularists — in order to ensure a full and proper implementation of the principles they believe in and defend?

Is there any fairness or justice in ascribing legitimacy to certain political ideologies while denying the same to others?

Ms. Abu Rishieh is perfectly entitled to her opinion, but she certainly has no right to demand that her opponents be denied the right to be politically involved or active.

Although I am a strong believer that Islam, unlike many other religions, caters for spiritual and mundane requirements of man, and that it was revealed for the purpose of providing man with and convince Ms. Abu Rishieh that Islam is not what she believes it to be.

My main concern here is to invite Ms. Abu Rishieh, secularists, liberals, Islamists and all groups of various ideological commitments and political programmes to agree on a basic common denominator, namely democracy.

In a democracy, people exercise their right to disagree and having the right alone to exclude others or prevent them from appealing to the people, who issue the final verdict.

We must all recognise the fact that a spectrum of opinions and degrees of varying intensity (from radicalism to moderation) exist in every human group or party or congregation. This applies to the Islamists just as it applies to secularists, liberals and others.

This phenomenon of variation is by no means characteristic to communities in the world, past and present, and will always manifest itself in the future.

The only means to deal with differences is to genuinely opt for democratisation, a process that is conditionally accompanied by tolerance and toleration.

Azzam Tamimi,
Centre for the Study of Democracy,
University of Westminster,
London.

Escalating violence from Islamist groups raises questions

By Tom Porteous

CAIRO. Egypt — Although the recent bomb explosions in Cairo's chaotic Tahrir Square could hardly be heard above the drone of traffic, the roar of bus engines and screams of car horns, the attackers could hardly have chosen a target which contains in one place more symbols of the establishment they seek to undermine.

At one end of Tahrir Square stands the largest and most despised department of the Egyptian bureaucracy, the Mugamma'a, where those Egyptian citizens who do not have access to some powerful patron must queue for hours and often bribe officials if they are to obtain indispensable documents, certificates and identity papers.

Next to the Mugamma'a is the American University regarded by the Islamist groups as a symbol of the cultural corruption or westernisation of the privileged layer of Egyptian society. On the other side of Tahrir Square the Egyptian Museum is not only one of the chief attractions for a tourist industry which the Islamic extremists have vowed to destroy, but also houses the treasures of a pre-Islamic Egyptian history which they feel should be ignored.

Beside the museum is the Nile Hilton, of which the bars, casino and discotheque are anathema to the extremists. The hotel is flanked on one side by the headquarters of the ruling National Party which has won every election since it was established and has consistently blocked attempts in the Egyptian parliament to secure a legal political role for the Islamic opposition. On the other side of the Nile Hilton is the Arab League which now coordinates cooperation between a number of Arab governments in what is a concerted campaign against political Islam throughout the Arab World.

The recent bomb attacks and other terrorist actions such as the shooting of policemen are pointing to an escalation of the conflict between the government and militant Islamic groups. Psychologically, the bombs in Tahrir Square have brought home to middle class Egyptians the fact that militant Islam is no longer a

phenomenon confined to the poor cities of southern Egypt or the overcrowded slums of Cairo and Alexandria. And the increasing violence has given the lie to the assurances of the Ministry of the Interior that the security situation is under control.

Inside the heavily guarded Interior Ministry, General Baha Al Din Ibrahim, director of the Public Relations Department, tries to minimise the problem. "This problem has been going on for a long time, for nearly half a century. It used to happen that these groups would carry out some attacks and then when the police faced them they stopped. This is what happened after the assassination of President Sadat (in 1981). This time we want as a police force to root out the extremists, to put an end to their activities. We want society to feel safe from these groups for the next 10 or 20 years."

Until recently the violence associated with militant Islam was limited to rare assassination attempts against senior government figures, relatively sporadic sectarian vandalism and fairly regular confrontations between police and members of Islamic groups. On the whole, few people were affected by the violence or even knew that it was happening.

But gradually over the past few years the violence has become more widespread and more diverse in its nature. The Islamic groups began to single out writers and journalists as targets of assassination, as well as government officials. Then they hit at the tourist industry in Upper Egypt, killing several foreigners. Now they have brought their campaign right into the heart of Cairo. Every day now brings news of another attack, more arrests or a new counter-terrorist operation on the part of the police. And every day terrorism and extremism are the subject of numerous editorials and commentaries in newspapers, radio and television.

Much of the comment, as well as statements from the police, focuses on the international aspect of the wave of violence, especially after the bombing of the New York Trade Centre and the subsequent arrests of several Arab men. It is alleged by people

like Gen. Baha Al Din that the Islamic groups in Egypt are acting in cooperation with Islamic movements in other parts of the Arab World and that together, guided by leaders living abroad, they are planning their strategy for the whole region.

As proof of this, senior officers in the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior and officials in the Information Ministry point to the similarity between the wording of the statements of these groups issued in response to crises such as the Gulf war and the Bosnian conflict. Furthermore, according to Gen. Baha Al Din, underground tapes produced by different Islamic groups in different Arab countries as part of their propaganda campaign are clearly derived from one source. The police claim that different groups in Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia are even coordinating their methods of confrontation, the use of particular types of explosive, and the use of motorcycles in assassination attempts.

According to a senior Egyptian policeman who did not wish to be identified, one of the stimuli for this cooperation between different Arab Islamic groups was the Afghan war in which many Arab volunteers took part. They shared a common purpose, they undertook strenuous military training together, they saw combat and they had plenty of opportunity to discuss their ideas and build up a network for when they returned home. Peshawar, the site of Afghan refugee camps on the Pakistan border, is still said to be the headquarters for some of the coordination between the groups, with members going back and forth on missions to the Arab World.

An indication that Arab governments take this coordination between the groups seriously is that governments are now cooperating more than ever in combating the groups on a regional level. Each year Arab interior ministers meet to discuss security issues, crime and drugs. The campaign against militant Islam is now said to be the number one priority at these meetings. Last January the interior ministers of Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria — the three states most

concerned — met specifically to deepen their cooperation. They decided to open in April an Office for Arab Security Information, of which Gen. Baha Al Din Ibrahim is to be the director.

"The main cooperation is the exchange of information," he explained. "But we are planning to make joint training here in Egypt to train the men responsible for facing these groups. They must be trained to a high degree, of course. We are also planning to exchange those accused of terrorist crimes in every country."

Gen. Baha Al Din Ibrahim points out that cooperation between Arab governments is not uniform, but depends on how severe a threat from Islamic militants each government faces. "You will notice," he says, "that this is a very severe problem in Egypt, and in Algeria for example; but it is nothing in Libya and it is nothing in Saudi Arabia. In Jordan there is a problem but it is not to the same degree, not in the same style. You cannot say it is a severe problem for these countries. Of course they must be aware of it and expect it and they have to protect themselves. But there is a big difference between those who face the problem and those who expect it."

Since the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the assassination of President Sadat by Islamic militants two years later, the Egyptian government has frequently accused Teheran of supporting Islamic groups in Egypt. Diplomatic relations have been almost non-existent. Now the Algerian government too, which used to have normal relations with the Islamic republic, has accused Iran of supporting the violent campaign of militant Islamic groups in Algeria and has cut diplomatic ties with Teheran. Egypt and Algeria also accuse Sudan, where the National Islamic Front has recently emerged as the ideological influence behind the military regime of President Omar Bashir.

"The main evidence we have against Iran," says General Baha Al Din, "is that Iran itself announced that one of its main policies is to export its Islamic revolution to other countries. As for Sudan, when we arrested

some suspects here they confessed that they took their training in camps in Sudan. That's the first evidence. And second, we have seized many different kinds of weapons coming from the south. Our police and the army are working together on the southern borders and we believe that most of the weapons in the hands of the Islamic groups are coming from Sudan. Can we say that the Sudanese government itself is involved in this traffic? At least it is sure that the government did not take any strong steps to stop it."

The alleged involvement of Sudan and Iran in support of the Islamic groups is used to justify the particularly hardline policies which Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria are now pursuing against the groups. Repressive tactics and counter-attacks are the main strategy of the Egyptian government. Yet observers point out that trying to cure some of the social ills and allowing Islamists to express themselves on the political scene would do much to defuse the situation.

And there is the problem of police behaviour: Human rights organisations in North Africa have now built up a substantial catalogue of abuses being carried out by the police in the campaign against militant Islam. Even if these abuses are not coordinated there seems to be a pattern of state violence and intimidation which some critics say is counter-productive. Arbitrary arrests, torture, military trials, the detention and torture of relatives of fugitive suspects including their wives and children, the deliberate killing of unarmed suspects by "death squads", the rounding up of all the young men in villages or slums — the dossier of abuses compiled by human rights organisations in the region makes depressing reading.

One of the achievements of the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) has been not only to provide an insight into the dynamics of the conflict between the government and militant Islam, but also to question both the government's and the groups' version of the conflict. For instance Hisham Mubarak, a lawyer who has closely followed the trials of militant groups on

behalf of the EOHR, is convinced that Sudanese or Iranian support for the militants operating in Egypt is being overplayed.

If foreign involvement plays a minor part in the problem, critics of the government's strong-arm tactics say, the effectiveness of these methods in the campaign against extremist activities should be questioned. After all, people point out — not only in private conversation but also in the main-line press — the problem seems to be getting worse, not better.

The obsession of governments with a pan-Arab militant Islamic plot to destabilise the region has blinded them to the more important domestic sources of the problem of militant Islam, according to Fahmy Howewi, a columnist at Al Ahram, the largest Egyptian daily. "I think the main mistake of the government," he says, "is that they thought the people are difficult to admit that you have a problem inside the country. It is difficult to say that we are having

social, economic, political problems. It is easier to say those people are supported or provoked by certain external sources or organisations."

"As long as the government is closing doors against legal political Islamic activities," says Mr. Howewi, "I think things will get worse. We talk about cooperation between certain Arab countries in the security field against Islamic groups. We should ask why are these countries having problems with Islamic groups. The main problem is that authorities are insisting in oppressing these groups. As for those who are already working in the groups, probably when they see that a lot of their colleagues have been killed they will stop... If we stop now, we will have achieved nothing... We have had a lot of success. It is a policy we have to carry out not only for one or two months, but continuously and we have rearranged our forces to execute the policy throughout the country" — World News Link



At least 120 people have been killed in Egypt in the past year and the country has experienced its worst political violence since the assassination of President Sadat in 1981 (WNL photo)

Russian police learning how to be cops — American style

By Matthew Schofield
Reuter

in our area constantly," he said in a recent interview.

Russian experts say property crimes in that country have increased by as much as 250 per cent since 1985. All crimes are up an estimated 60 per cent, and the officers estimated property crime in one residential area of St. Petersburg with about 60,000 people was about 300 cases a month.

The other police officers from the St. Petersburg force attending the course are Captain Vladimir Zharinov, Major Sergei Fedorov, Lieutenant-Major Svetlana Golubeva and Lieutenant-Major Elena Levchenko. They are the first police officers from the former Soviet Union to study criminology in the U.S. midwest, although other groups have studied on the U.S. east coast.

They say the explosive growth of crime in economically ravaged Russia brought them half-way round the world to learn how to combat problems at home.

Until their graduation April 30, they are studying everything from investigative techniques to how to use firearms.

"Next year, we will increase our police force by 30 per cent perhaps," said Gennady Nadezhkin, a 33-year-old police captain in a suburb of St. Petersburg, Russia's second city.

"Since 1985, crime is increasing

deeper than better training, but the Kansas exchange might help."

However, the Russian police officers do not characterise the situation in their homeland so bleakly. Guns are still rare among the public, there is not the drug problem that the U.S. has, and a police officer still decides before he or she goes on assignment whether or not to take firearms along, they said.

Capt. Zharinov said the primary difference between Russian training and the training he has been getting in the U.S. is money. Although class size and basic police studies are the same, there is also a greater emphasis in the U.S. on how to use police ears, which are not as plentiful back home, he said.

"I want to learn everything I can," Maj. Fedorov said. "Maybe it's too early to know what all the benefits of this visit will be, but people in my country are very tired of high prices, instability and crime."



Learning the finer points

Mother of murder victim asks why neo-Nazi violence doesn't stop

By Terrence Petty
The Associated Press

VETSCHAU, Germany — One of Gerda Zerna's most cherished keepsakes is a 1983 snapshot showing her son Mike, holding his baby brother Oliver.

The two boys were always bud-dies, until Mike's recent murder by a neo-Nazi mob.

Mike was only 22. Extremists bludgeoned him outside an East German bar and then toppled a one-and-a-half-tonne van onto his broken body — just because he had long hair.

Cerda Zerna contends most Germans and the authorities don't want to admit the magnitude of the far-right threat.

"Reality is being ignored. The leaders of these (neo-Nazi) groups are loose on the streets, telling younger kids that violence is a good thing," said Mrs. Zerna.

In February, Interior Minister Rudolf Seiters claimed that "state measures... are working" against neo-Nazi violence, and many believe.

There were 17 killings last year and 2,200 injuries. A Turk and two Germans have died so far this year, and 300 people are known to have been injured.

Neo-Nazi crimes appear to be a seasonal phenomenon in Germany, with the greatest surge occurring in summer and autumn. That was the case in 1991 and again last year.

Even if that doesn't happen this year, the final hate-crime tally for 1993 could surpass last year's record 2,285 at the current pace.

Known membership in extreme-right groups is up, according to the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, which monitors extremists: from about 39,800 in 1991 to 42,700 at the end of last year.

Neo-Nazi organisations have easily circumvented the federal ban by changing their names.

But the government insists it has not been trying to play down the far-right threat. Interior Ministry spokesman Detlev Bouke said the new law enforcement measures have made neo-Nazis more hesitant to attack.

"But that doesn't mean it's time to give the all-clear," he said.

No one needs to tell that to families of neo-Nazis' victims.

Mustafa Demiral, a 56-year-old Turk who came to Germany in the 1960s as a "guest worker," died in a mock execution in the West German city of Muelheim of March 9. Two radicals beat him. One of them put an air pistol to his head and pulled the trigger three times. The gun didn't fire. But Demiral died of a heart attack.

Karl Starb, a 45-year-old German, died on Jan. 15. A ground-keeper at a park in the East German city of Arnstadt, he was beaten unconscious by a gang of teenage skinheads. They threw him out into a busy street and he was run over by two cars.

Mike Zerna lived with his parents and three brothers in Vetschau, a working-class community.

According to witnesses, about 20 skinheads kicked Mike with their heavy paratrooper boots and overturned a van onto him.

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Economy

EC monetary committee urges 'warning lights' on ERM turmoil

LONDON (R) — A system of "warning lights" should be set up to alert European Community (EC) nations to currency strains and prevent a rerun of last September's turmoil in the exchange rate mechanism (ERM). Top monetary officials say.

A confidential report by the EC's monetary committee, to be discussed by finance ministers at informal talks in Denmark Sunday, says the ERM needs to change its internal rules and "break new ground" after a bout of speculative attacks.

One potentially explosive recommendation would allow any country — not just the nation whose currency is under fire — to seek a devaluation of currencies thought to be out of line.

"One of the lessons to be drawn from the recent turmoil is

that the European Monetary System should adapt its internal rules at this point and break new ground," the report says. "Its procedures should lead to action, when necessary, well in advance of the development of expectations of change on the markets."

The report of the secretive committee, made up of top finance ministry and central bank officials, was drawn up after heavy speculative pressure forced Britain and Italy to withdraw their currencies from the EC currency grid in September.

The strains have continued, with the latest casualties Spain and Portugal, whose currencies were devalued last week.

Denmark's vote Tuesday in favour of the Maastricht treaty on economic and political union has eased pressure on the ERM but

finance ministers will use the report as the basis for talks on how to prevent new strains breaking out.

The document, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters, says the EC must monitor the ERM more closely and "continuously ask itself whether and to what extent the parity grid is sustainable and corresponds to the underlying economic situation."

It suggests a confidential set of economic indicators be drawn up. These could be thought of as "warning lights" and would mainly include measures of competitiveness to detect in advance whether EC exchange rates were moving out of line.

The committee also recommends a key change in the way the ERM has functioned since it was set up on the initiative of

France and Germany as a "zone of monetary stability" in 1979.

Since then, it has always been the country whose currency is under attack which has called for a "realignment" or change in its pre-set value against other member currencies.

If ministers agree, countries with strong currencies could take the initiative if they thought a weak-currency country was refusing to devalue and destabilising the whole system.

The report fires a warning shot at Britain and Italy should they want to rejoin — in Britain's case a remote chance after repeated statements by Prime Minister John Major against this.

It says nations whose currencies are floating outside the ERM can only rejoin by "mutual agreement."

liberalise the economy, Mr. Al Erian said.

Another condition was the imposition of tighter fiscal discipline, Mr. Al Erian said.

Mr. Al Erian and Mr. Leghari refused to say whether the two sides had agreed on a target for cutting Pakistan's yawning fiscal deficit.

Finance ministry officials have said the budget deficit could hit 7.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal 1992/93 (July/June) compared with a forecast 5.3 per cent.

The deficit made up 6.1 per cent of GDP in 1991/92, down from 8.8 per cent the previous year but well short of the 4.8 per cent target set by the IMF as part of conditions for aid.

It will be Pakistan's first loan from the IMF under the ESAF since the previous structural adjustment facility (SAF) finished last December.

The three-year \$966 million SAF loan ran into difficulties when payments were suspended for a year in 1990 after Pakistan failed to bring down its fiscal

deficit to 4.8 per cent of GDP.

The World Bank has agreed to give Pakistan \$250 million under the public sector adjustment loan in the form of balance of payments support.

Mr. Leghari said he found as economy in crisis when he took over as finance minister on April 18 after President Ghulam Ishaq Khan sacked Mr. Sharif's 30-month-old government on charges of nepotism, economic mismanagement and handing out business favours to friends.

"There had been a profligacy in spending and a lack of resource mobilisation for several years," Mr. Leghari said.

Public domestic debt rose to 600 billion rupees (\$23 billion) this year from 381 billion (\$14 billion) in 1989/90.

Foreign debt has grown by 3.5 billion in the past two years to total nearly \$18.5 billion at the end of 1992/93 with debt servicing at \$1.5 billion this year, he said.

He warned that debt servicing could become the largest single expenditure unless swift action was taken.

Mr. Leghari declined to give details of the conditions of the loans or of policies to be implemented, saying only that taxation would be a big component of the budget due on June 10.

The budget would be operational for four months, giving time to the next government, which is to be elected in polls on July 14, to decide which policies it would adopt.

Mr. Leghari said the agreement foresees economic growth of 7.5 per cent. "This will require revenue measures and improving the structure and quality of tax."

"We will exercise prudence in expenditure in areas where there was profligacy in the past," he said.

Negative growth of 3.0 per cent in the vital agriculture sector has more than halved the economic growth rate to three per cent in 1992/93. Mr. Leghari said last week, Pakistan had forecast growth at 6.3 per cent for this year.

A final decision on the ESAF disbursement had previously been expected after the budget was announced.

PEKING (AP) — The trade minister said China hopes to increase its foreign trade to \$200 billion by 1995 and enter the ranks of the world's top 10 trading countries, an official newspaper has said.

The China Daily quoted Wu Yi, minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation, as saying China will speed passage of its first foreign trade law and improve and diversify exports in an effort to meet the goal. Mr. Wu said China also will pursue border trade with newly emerging markets in the former Soviet republics and South East Asia. China's border trade more than doubled last year. China was the world's eleventh largest trader in 1992 with a trade volume of \$165.63 billion, ahead of Taiwan, Singapore, and South Korea but behind Hong Kong, according to a recent Xinhua news agency report.

Boom in China will change Asia, says think tank

LONDON (R) — The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) has said that China's economic boom was transforming the future of east Asia and could also change the country's politics and frontiers.

Noting that China's free-market reforms had brought a remarkable 12 per cent growth last year, the IISS, one of the world's top think tanks, said the communist giant might come close to being the world's largest economy by the year 2010.

"And yet," the IISS said in its annual review of world affairs, "the flourishing is bringing with it fundamental changes in China's economy, political system, and perhaps even its frontiers."

"It is also reshaping the way east Asians are beginning to look at their future ... even the Japanese are adjusting to it," said the review. "Strategic Survey 1992-1993."

The IISS said Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping had surged forward with economic reform to avoid the collapse of Communist Party control that befell the Soviet Union but some regions had gone ahead of others.

This was causing insecurity in Peking, despite the country's economic boom and the decline of the military threat from Russia, it said.

"Rapid growth might require so much regional diversity that

China might not be recognisable as a centre-driven, single state by early in the next century," it said.

Japan, by contrast, was the scene of political stagnation, the IISS said. Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa "has proved a disappointment in navigating through some very choppy waters," the survey said.

"He has appeared half-hearted over political reform, disengaged from the economy's problems and hesitant in dealing with a major corruption scandal. The Japanese (also) still seem confounded by the rapid pace of change in international affairs and unable to establish new approaches to foreign and defence policy," it added.

But the IISS predicted that Japanese voters' distaste for widespread change could continue to keep reform to a minimum.

Turning to North and South Korea, the IISS said hopes for an end to the stalemate between the two countries had evaporated last year, and "without a basic change in the troglodyte North Korean regime ... the Korean Peninsula looks set for a further period of insecurity."

The IISS described as ominous the March decision by North Korea to withdraw from the nuclear and added, without elaboration, that "there may be no remedy short of force in one form or another."

ECONOMIC NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran to export gas to Georgia

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has agreed to export five million cubic metres of natural gas per day to the former Soviet republic of Georgia, Iran's IRNA news agency has said. It said the deal was part of an agreement reached by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Vaezi in Tbilisi under which Iran would also help Georgia in oil exploration and petrochemical projects. The report, monitored in Nicosia, did not say how the gas would be shipped or how Georgia, which is torn by civil war and suffers from an acute energy shortage, would pay for it.

UAE duty free shops boost trade, revenues

ABU DHABI (R) — Duty free shops at the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) main airports recorded their highest revenues last year by luring passengers with raffles offering cash, gold and luxury cars, managers said. Dubai International Airport, the UAE's largest airport with 5.4 million passengers, boasted revenues at its duty free shop by 35 per cent to \$135 million in 1992, public relations manager Anita Mehra said. Annual revenues have risen six-fold since the shop, where travellers can buy tax-free luxury goods, opened in 1985. "A lot of the passengers were attracted by the car raffle," Ms. Mehra said. "We raffled 187 cars since it was set up." Abu Dhabi airport's duty free revenues rose to 161 million dirhams (\$43.8 million) in 1991, from 143 million dirhams (\$36.9 million) in 1990. Passenger traffic rose to 2.4 million. Annual revenues stood at \$6.5 million in 1984, its first year of operations. Marketing manager Nivcen Ibrahim said this year they were spending three million dirhams (\$817,000) to expand the shop.

Taiwan said to slow infrastructure spending

TAIPEI (R) — The Taiwan government, facing a financial squeeze, will cut spending on its huge infrastructure programme next year and delay the completion of some projects, a newspaper has said. A cabinet committee has decided to slash spending under the island's six-year development plan to 591 billion Taiwan dollars (\$22.8 billion) in the fiscal year to June 1994 from 758 billion Taiwan dollars (\$29.3 billion) originally planned. The mass-circulation China Times said. Government spending on the plan is expected to total 620 billion Taiwan dollars (\$23.9 billion) in the current fiscal year, the newspaper quoted unnamed officials as saying. It said the government now planned to delay completion of the six-year plan, which originally envisaged spending by the public and private sectors of about \$300 billion between 1991 and 1997, to the year 2000. The plan includes construction of roads, ports, power plants and other facilities to upgrade Taiwan's infrastructure and propel it into the ranks of developed economies. But the government, warning that state finances were under severe pressure after several years of record budget deficits, announced in March that it would consider slowing the six-year plan. A formal policy announcement is expected around July.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY MAY 23, 1993

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Found it

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Combine your best judgment with your most intuitive and prophetic insight today so that you will be better able to gain the right philosophy of life proving to others that you are a remarkable individual.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Using this day to extend your knowledge can be disappointing but do your best anyway and later you are in a better position to handle some new perplexities.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Try to steer clear from some arguments over finances in the daytime while in the evening it's not advisable to bring up more points with a close companion.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Avoid dealing directly with any material or mundane problems that face you today and sidestep the urge to go to new places to attain ideas tonight.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You want to reach a new accord with an ally but aspects indicate it's not the right time so instead carry through with what you've agreed to do.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You want to be of service to others but don't expect thanks today if you do. While tonight sidestep a partner who is eager to cut you down to size.

LEO: (July 22 August 21) You can have a pleasant time during the day if you stick to simple and unexpected pleasures while tonight work is a bore so enjoy music, TV, radio.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Matters at home require careful consideration and cautious

solutions so be in such an attitude, while tonight brings a need to use self-control at entertainment.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Using this day to extend your knowledge can be disappointing but do your best anyway and later you are in a better position to handle some new perplexities.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Try to steer clear from some arguments over finances in the daytime while in the evening it's not advisable to bring up more points with a close companion.

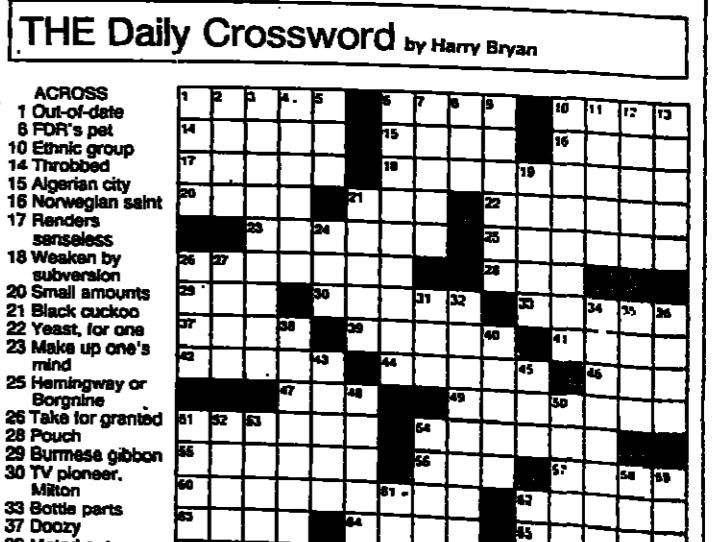
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You feel frustrated in doing and getting the things you want so postpone them until a better time and in the evening be equally careful in spending money.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 21) Buy yourself getting rid of anything private that stands in the way of your progress in the morning. Tonight consider how best to attain cherished longings.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You find persons you would like to see are busy with their own concerns so handle yours in the evening do something to cheerup your attachment.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You would be wise to attend to personal and not worldly interests in the morning and to do vaguely with friends who have aches they want you to grind.

THE Daily Crossword by Harry Bryan



Sports

Rockets, Supersonics battle in deciding semifinal

SEATTLE (AP) — It's a tale of two cities.

When the Seattle Supersonics and the Houston Rockets finally settle their Western Conference semifinal series, the deciding factor may be the homecourt advantage. Neither team has been able to win on the road.

The Rockets sent the series back to the Seattle Coliseum for the winner-take-all game with a 103-90 victory Thursday night.

"I'll tell you, it's going to be different," Seattle's Shawn Kemp promised. "Much different."

"It's a crazy series," said Otis Thorpe of Houston.

The Rockets captured games 3, 4 and 6 in Houston by 18, 11 and 13 points. Seattle won games 1, 2 and 5 at home by 9, 11 and 25 points.

Except for geography, there isn't much separating the clubs, each of whom won 55 regular-season games. The Sonics earned the homecourt advantage by beating Houston three out of four times during the regular season.

In this series, the Sonics are averaging 98.5 points and 41 rebounds to Houston's 98.0 points and 40.5 rebounds.

Houston, with shot-blocking wizard Hakeem Olajuwon of Nigeria at centre, is averaging 6.5 blocks to the Sonics' 4.1, and the Sonics are turning the ball over less than the Rockets — 13.8 to 18.5.

In game 6, Houston's Kenny Smith scored 30 points on 13-of-16 shooting, and he missed his first two shots. But until then, Smith hadn't been a major factor in the series, averaging 14.5 points.

"This series has taken on a pattern," Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "We have to change it."

Riley avoids firing verbal volleys at Bulls: Pat Riley knows that Michael Jordan called the New York Knicks a flawed team that is



Bulls' Horace Grant sinks in a slam dunk

ripe for the Chicago Bulls' taking.

He's not about to fire the same volley in the other direction.

Injuries to Horace Grant, John Paxson and Bill Cartwright have raised questions about whether the Bulls are vulnerable in the Eastern Conference finals, although the two-time defending NBA champions are undefeated in seven playoff games this year.

"They might be a little banged up, but that hasn't affected them yet," the Knicks coach said Friday.

day. "They've played extremely well in the playoffs and their offensive effort has been vintage. I never thought of them as vulnerable, even during the season when we beat them three times. I have too much respect for guys wearing championships rings to think of them as vulnerable."

Riley also professed not to be offended by Jordan's comments this week that the Knicks can be beaten if leading scorers Patrick

Ewing and John Starks are contained.

"Michael has a right to say that," Riley said. "He's the man on the throne. He's pre-eminent right now in the NBA. He's right that we have some weakness. We also have some strengths."

Recent history has shown that championship teams have needed a few years of failure in the conference finals before going on to win titles. Detroit's nemesis was Boston, before the Pistons won twice, and Chicago had to break through against Detroit before the Bulls were successful the last two years.

"Sometimes you do have to pay your dues in this league. But we hope to get past that," Riley said. "It's a state of mind. Starting last year we thought we had the talent to win. We have the opportunity to do it now."

Point guard Doc Rivers said Jordan's comments weren't offensive to the Knicks.

"Every team is flawed," Rivers said. "If there was a team that wasn't flawed, it would go 82-0 and win the championship every year. The secret to winning is finding the other team's flaws and exploit them."

Rivers, a 10-year veteran who has never before been to a conference final, said he saw the series, which starts Sunday at Madison Square Garden, as "an awesome opportunity. I didn't think I'd ever be in this situation."

Meanwhile, Grant, who injured his right ankle in the Bulls' first game against Cleveland, practiced for the first time since the injury, although he has not missed a playoff game.

"Horace will play," Bulls coach Phil Jackson said. "He worked gingerly, but we'll work him more Saturday."

Cartwright and Paxson both are recovering from knee problems that hampered them throughout the regular season.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Wright faces X-rays ahead of World Cup qualifiers

LONDON (R) — Arsenal striker Ian Wright faces X-rays on his damaged ankle this weekend ahead of England's important World Cup matches against Poland and Norway. Wright was injured after a challenge by Sheffield Wednesday's Paul Warhurst during Arsenal's dramatic 2-1 F.A. Cup final replay win Thursday. Wright, who missed the last two England qualifiers against San Marino and the Netherlands because of injury, finished the league season playing with a broken toe. Meanwhile, both he and Sheffield Wednesday striker Mark Bright could face a Football Association probe into their behaviour during Thursday's replay. The F.A. received complaints from members of the public angry at seeing Bright elbow Arsenal's match winner Andy Linighan in the face and Wright mouth obscenities at a linesman.

Roma rescued from bankruptcy threat

ROME (R) — The threat of bankruptcy was lifted from Italian Cup finalists AS Roma Friday when two businessmen agreed to take over the debt-ridden club. The first division club said in a statement that industrialists Pietro Mezzaroma and Franco Sensi, both associated with Roma in the past, had signed a preliminary agreement to assume the majority shareholding from the Italfin 80 company. Italfin 80 is the flagship of outgoing president Giuseppe Ciarrapico, currently in prison in Milan after his arrest on corruption charges last week. No figures were released for the transaction. Roma are reported to have total debts of around \$45 million.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
Tours Media Services, Inc.

THE LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♦ 7 4 2

♦ 3 6

♦ K 10 9 7

♦ K 8 7 5 4

WEST

♦ J 10 5 3

♦ 9

♦ A 8 4 2

♦ K Q J

♦ A Q

♦ 6 5 4 3 2

♦ 9 3

SOUTH

♦ A K Q 8 6

♦ 7 10 7 6 3

♦ J 8

♦ A 10

The bidding:

South West North East

1 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♠ 4 ♠

4 ♠ Dbl Pass Pass

Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♠

About 25 years ago Jean René Verne wrote an article called "The Law of Total Tricks." It attracted little attention then and, despite overwhelming proof of its accuracy, there are still many doubters. However, an excellent book on the subject is now on the market: *To Bid or Not to Bid: The Law of Total Tricks* by Larry Cohen (Platinum Press, 272 pp., paperback). Available from the author, 181 Longhill Rd., Bldg. 1-6, Little Falls, NJ. 07424. \$11.95 plus \$2.50 postage and handling.

The LAW of Total Tricks states

simply: "The total number of tricks available on any deal is equal to the total number of trumps (of each side's best combined fit). This book is not for the casual player. However, it is guaranteed to sharpen the competitive bidding of anyone who takes the trouble to read and digest the contents."

Cohen's classic guide of hands from all levels of play to support the accuracy of the LAW (author's capital). For example, consider this hand from the 1978 World Pairs. The eventual winners, Marcelo Branco and Gabinho Cintra of Brazil, bid to four spades and, after the lead of the ace of hearts, should have been defeated one trick. They weren't, but that's immaterial.

Should South have gone on to four spades? The LAW says no—he should have doubled four hearts instead! North was likely to hold three spades and one heart; thus each side had eight trumps in their combined holding, making a combined total of 16 trumps. If only 16 tricks were available, and if North-South were destined to take 10 in spades, four hearts was going down four tricks! A double would have paid off without the risk of trying for game. As the cards in North-South were held to nine trumps and East-West to seven, and with a total of 18 tricks available on the deal, can anyone really question the validity of the LAW?

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The LAW of Total Tricks states

Record number in golf competition

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Pakistani Ambassador Tarig Afridi Friday hosted an annual golf competition for members of the Bisharat Golf Club. The event, which attracted a record number of players, was keenly contested and the overall handicap winner was Mr. M.S. Park of Korea, with Mr. Adnan Tabaghchi close behind and Mr. Dick Lockyer third. The best gross score of the day was achieved by the club captain, Mr. Hanafi Abu Al Hawa. Several international players based in Jordan took part in the competition.

Russia to go for broke against Greece

MOSCOW (R) — Russia will play an all-out attacking game against Greece in their World Cup qualifier Sunday, knowing victory would practically guarantee them a trip to the finals in the United States next year. Lev Zakharov, international secretary of the Russian Soccer Federation, said the team should be unchanged from the one which swept aside Hungary 3-0 last month. Russia have a maximum eight points from four games in group five, just one behind the Greeks who have played one match more. Third-placed Hungary have just three points.

Tyson wants someone to care for his birds

KINGSTON (AP) — Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson wants someone to care for his beloved pigeons while he serves a 6-year sentence in Indiana for rape. Tyson first became interested in the birds as a youngster in Brooklyn. His fascination continued when he moved in with the late trainer Cus D'Amato at his Catskill Mountain home. Tyson still keeps 150 homing pigeons in Catskill, and that's becoming a problem, according to Tyson's friend Jay Bright. Bright said he is searching for someone who won't mind cleaning the two-story coop and feeding and watering the pigeons. Bright said Tyson needs someone who will care for the birds and continue their training. The job pays \$200 a month, and about 25 people have already applied.

Flying filly Nicer wins Irish 1,000 Guineas

DUBLIN (R) — The flying British filly Nicer, trained by Barry Hills and ridden by his son Michael, ran out a decisive winner of the Irish 1,000 Guineas Saturday.

Prost on pole for Monaco Grand Prix

MONTE CARLO (R) — Alain Prost claimed his sixth successive pole position this season and the 26th of his career Saturday when he set the pace in final qualifying for Sunday's Monaco Grand Prix.

Prost, who leads the World Drivers' Championship by two points from great rival Ayrton Senna, dominated the session in his Williams.

He was out on the circuit early in the hour-long period and quickly worked his way down to a fastest time of one minute 20.557 seconds at an average speed of 148.725 kph.

"This remained unchallenged, his nearest rival being German Michael Schumacher in a Benetton.

He claimed a share of the front row with the second best time of 1:21.190 in his Ford-powered B193B, using traction control for the first time this weekend.

Senna, who had a minor accident at the chicane, was third-fastest in his McLaren and will share the second row with Briton Damon Hill in the second Williams.

Senna touched the barriers at the entry to the chicane and locked up under braking as he half-spun to a halt in an escape lane. Senna was left to sit out the rest of the session on a nearby park bench.

Hill, who had provisional pole from Thursday's wet opening session, was never able to mount a serious threat to Prost or Senna despite making a big effort in the second half of the session.

World Cup qualifying matches

Yemen score late equaliser to hold Jordan to 1-1 draw

By Aleen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

JORDAN SATURDAY drew 1-1 with Yemen in the opening match of the Asian group A World Cup qualifying matches held at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid.

The match was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein, deputising for His Majesty the King. Also attending was Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakir, Minister of Youth Saleh Israheid and over 12,000 fans.

Although both teams seemed tense and played a slow unimpressive game in the first half, Jordan had an upper hand throughout the match as strikers Jiryes Tadros and Aref Hussein mounted repeated attacks hoping to score an early goal. However, Yemeni goalkeeper Ameen Sunaini successfully aborted all such attempts as the first half ended scoreless.

Jordan's captain Jamal Abu Abed had two definite scoring chances, as he got a pass just inside the penalty box, and later again failed to score from a corner kick that the Yemeni team's star Sunaini totally controlled.

Yemen accelerated their pace in the second half but were stunned by a spectacular 65th minute goal when Jordan's Subhi Suleiman faked a pass and blasted a powerful

Jiryes Tadros attempts to break Yemeni defense in Saturday's match between Jordanian and Yemeni national teams

shot from well outside the penalty box.

Both teams lost the efforts of a player each, as Yemen's Sharaf Mahfouz and Jordan's Mohammad Al Khazali got red-card bookings.

The Jordanian team continued to dominate but lost the opportunity to capitalise on two chances by Hisham Abdul Mun'em, one from a 30 metre distance in the 77th minute and the other four minutes later that hit the post.

With 2 minutes remaining in

Marseille to face match-fixing inquiry

PARIS (R) — The French Soccer League said Saturday an inquiry would be held into an allegation that champions Marseille attempted to fix Thursday's match with Valenciennes.

A league spokesman said an investigation would start when it had received details of an official protest by Valenciennes.

The allegation, strongly denied by European Cup finalists Marseille, came from Valenciennes

defender Jacques Glassmann who said he had a phone conversation Wednesday with a Marseille official who offered him a bribe to take it easy in the match the following day.

League President Noel Le Graet told the sports daily L'Equipe he would take personal charge of the inquiry but said it would not open until after Wednesday's European Cup final.

to avoid harming Marseille's preparations for the Munich match with AC Milan.

Marseille won the match 1-0, virtually sealing the title, while the defeat left Valenciennes in serious relegation trouble. Valenciennes lodged a protest with the match referee.

The French League leaders

said the move was an attempt to destabilise Marseille at an important moment in their history.

pean Cup final.

Le Graet said it would be wise not to draw hasty conclusions and that he found it strange that such allegations should emerge just before a European Cup final.

"All this is nothing but a tissue of inventions," Marseille Vice-President Jean-Louis Leveque said Friday. "It's an attempt to unsettle Marseille at an important moment in their history."

He said he had learned that at

Indy the weather can change hour by hour and another "huge change" occurs from one set of tyres to the next.

"Keeping it flat down is an exercise I haven't accomplished yet," he said about pushing on the throttle.

No other driver has claimed to have done that either this May.

Mansell intends to practise at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway then return home for additional therapy. He'll be back at the track for carburetor day practice next Thursday.

"I'm not even going to focus on the race until next Thursday, Friday or Saturday," he said. "I'm astonished I'm in the (Indy) points lead. Not being pessimistic, but I won't be in the points lead after this race: I'm being realistic."

ICRC assails U.N. over Afghan conflict

GENEVA (AP) — A senior Red Cross official has criticised the United Nations for doing too little to stop the carnage in Afghanistan and predicted that a new ceasefire agreement would have little impact.

Jean-Michel Monod, head of Asian operations at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), said the level of misery in the capital Kabul was "intolerable."

He said more than 4,500 civilians had been injured and an estimated 1,000 people killed in Kabul over the past 10 days. "This indiscriminate shelling is hitting everywhere in the city," he told a news conference. "All areas have been hit. All hospitals have been hit. Everybody is shooting at everybody else, with devastating results."

Mr. Monod said the fighting — the worst since the ouster of President Najibullah in April 1992 — was meant to strengthen bargaining positions at peace talks among the rebel factions.

The talks in the eastern city of Jalalabad ended Thursday with agreement on a ceasefire and a new cabinet. Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud — the rival of Prime Minister-designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar — agreed to stand down. The fighting in Kabul has pitted Mr. Masoud's forces against those loyal to Mr.

Hekmatyar.

The warring factions continued to shell Kabul even after announcing the ceasefire.

Mr. Monod said the Jalalabad agreement was likely to have the same effect as previous accords negotiated in neighbouring Pakistan.

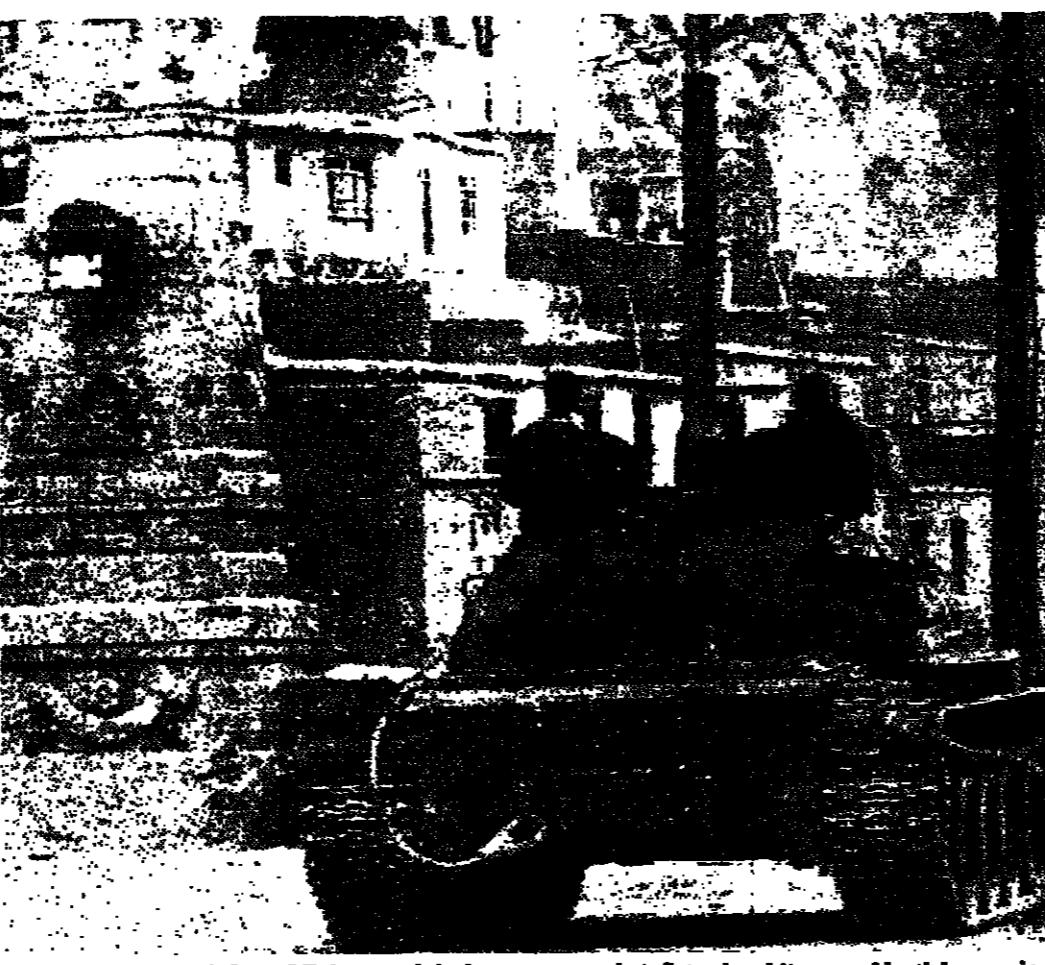
"It will temporarily bring some quiet to Kabul, but it certainly won't have a long-lasting effect," he said.

He said the United Nations had done too little to support regional peace initiatives to stop the factional fighting since the end of communist rule.

"It's good the regional powers — Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia — are trying to push the protagonists in the direction of a lasting ceasefire but they need help," he said.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has proposed that the United States and Russia should join in a grouping called "Friends of Afghanistan" to try to end the fighting. However, Mr. Monod said no action had so far been taken.

Security concerns prompted the United Nations to withdraw its expatriate staff from Kabul last August. Most foreign embassies are closed and virtually all aid agencies have pulled out. International appeals for funds to help victims of the civil war have



Soldiers manning a Defence Ministry tank look on as a rocket Saturday hits a residential area in Kabul

received practically no response.

The ICRC, which traditionally operates in areas of armed conflict, is now responsible for nearly all the relief efforts in Kabul. It has 15 Swiss staff there and runs

two of the capital's five remaining hospitals. It sends in 30 tonnes of food every week by road from Pakistan.

Mr. Monod said there was no power or water and little food,

but no signs yet of starvation.

"The ICRC is roughly the last organisation present," Mr. Monod said. "We feel a little bit lonesome in Kabul these days."

Sudan warns against any bid to intervene in South

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudan's Islamic fundamentalist government would send human waves against the guns of any army that tried to stop violence or provide safe areas in southern Sudan so that starving people can be fed, the foreign minister said.

"Intervention has been breached as a way of saving up to a million southern Sudanese facing possible death with international relief impeded by civil war and factional fighting among rebels."

Some have suggested a combination of two successful emergency relief operations of recent years.

One was the "safe haven" concept, which protected Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq from that country's army in 1991-92. Elijah

Malok, an official with the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), suggested at a news conference in the Kenyan capital Nairobi Thursday that a similar zone should be created in southern Sudan.

The other is Operation Restore Hope, in which U.S.-led forces invaded Somalia last December and kept Somalia at bay long enough to save hundreds of thousands of starving Somalis.

Donald Peterson, U.S. ambassador to Sudan, last month told reporters in Nairobi that the international community would have to act if peace talks between the government and rebels failed.

"If there is no progress toward a negotiated settlement, the international community will have to consider what should be done to

the awful suffering," he said.

Foreign Minister Hussein Sulieman Abu Salih alleged that the West, through its press and politicians, is waging a "stupid" campaign "to polarise world public opinion against Sudan for intervention" on humanitarian grounds.

But he said those who talk about intervening in Sudan are dreaming.

"They are misinformed on the Sudanese character and the nature of Islam in such matters," Mr. Abu Salih said in a television interview Friday night.

"There will be real jihad. There will be wave after wave of people fighting, not only a handful of soldiers or popular defence forces."

The junta, which took power in a 1989 coup, already has had

Muslim clerics declare the 10-year-old southern rebellion a holy war.

Mr. Abu Salih said Sudan never gives in to pressure and cited its current argument with Egypt over Halaib, an enclave in Egypt's extreme southeastern corner north of the international frontier.

He said Khartoum would be willing to cede rights to the disputed territory but accused Cairo of trying to bully its weaker southern neighbour with threats and troop movements.

With a more gentle approach, "we in the Sudan can give away this land, or even more," Mr. Abu Salih said. "But Sudan, its people and government, cannot relinquish an inch of land taken through force or twisting of the arm."

Parliamentary deputies are now bound to decide to hold nationwide discussions of a draft Soviet socialist constitution which guarantees a life fit for a human being to the working man," Pravda said.

"Yeltsin wants to end months of political stalemate over post-Soviet Russia's news draft constitution, blocked by a conservative parliament hostile to his radical economic reforms.

Buoyed by a popular endorsement of his presidency and reforms in an April referendum, Mr. Yeltsin has bypassed parliament and invited representatives from Russia's 88 regions to meet in Moscow on June 5 to discuss and perhaps pass a new constitution.

Hardline groups on the fringes of Russian politics said Friday they would hold their own rival constitutional conference at the same time. They would also invite regional representatives to Moscow to draw up a separate draft constitution.

Gennady Sayenko, a leading member of the conservative Russian Unity movement, told a news conference organisers of the hardliners' constitutional talks included his group, the National Salvation Front, and the officers'

Russian hardliners campaign for constitution referendum

MOSCOW (R) — Hardline conservatives say they have gathered enough signatures to force a nationwide referendum on bringing back a "Soviet socialist constitution," the conservative daily Pravda reported Saturday.

Reformist President Boris Yeltsin is planning a new constitution which would distance Russia from its Soviet past.

But Pravda said the pro-Soviet organisation Workers' Russia had by May 16 gathered signatures from 1,000,000 opponents of Mr. Yeltsin's plans. Russian law allows a referendum to be called if one million people sign a petition asking for it.

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of the former Soviet Union basic law of 1971.

The hardline groups have kept a low profile since the Russian workers' holiday on May 1, when their supporters clashed with police in Moscow.

On Feb. 26, hours after the World Trade Centre bombing killed six people and wounded more than 1,000 in New York, a similar device exploded in a downtown Cairo cafe, killing three people and wounding more than a dozen. Two of the dead were foreign tourists.

But the explosion was the fifth extremist attack since December in the heart of the Egyptian capital and the bloodiest. It is the first time a car bomb has been used in more than a year of violence between Muslim extremists and security forces.

Security sources said one of the three men who died Saturday was the brother of a girl who was killed instantly when the bomb blew up. They said 20 people were now known to have been injured and several were in critical condition.

The sources said investigators had found the detonator of the bomb and a timer. They estimated the bomb had contained 1.5 to two kilograms of explosives.

"This is a clear criminal work carried out by the terrorist groups, which have no religious aims whatsoever," the head of the state information service, Mamouda Beltagi, told Reuters.

Asked whether Muslim militants had been responsible, Major-General Fouad Hussain, Cairo's assistant police chief, told

Gomhuria newspaper quoted security officials as saying the owner of the vehicle is a professor at Al Azhar, Islam's highest learning institution. He told police he had parked the car behind the police station two days before the explosion and left for his town in the Nile Delta.

Police said the bomb was packed with nails and doctors said they extracted some from victims' bodies.

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The official said a 15-year-old

girl who died Friday was the

Rashads' sister. Three others

died the same day.

Doctors said at least five other

victims were in critical condition.

Police detained the owner of

the car and another man arrested

at the scene to question them

about possible links with extre-

mists.

"We have to create an

approach reflecting the spirit of

responsibility and we have to

check whatever we publish and to

Regime's jet bombs Kabul 'by mistake'

KABUL (Agencies) — A government plane bombed a residential neighbourhood by mistake Saturday, killing a 14-year-old girl and injuring eight other people, officials and residents said.

The aircraft dropped four bombs on the poor neighbourhood of Formula in south central Kabul, destroying a clay brick house. Three more bombs were dropped on a nearby vacant lot.

"I was so afraid. It was such a loud explosion," said Abdul Aziz, a butcher whose house next door was damaged.

Government jets have made dozens of raids against Hezb-e-Islami and its Shi'ite Hezb-e-Wahdat allies since artillery battles for control of the capital erupted 11 days ago.

"The jet was trying to hit a Hezb-e-Islami post on a nearby hill. They are shelling the city from there," Defence Ministry spokesman Yunis Qanuni said.

"One bomb was mistakenly dropped on a residential area."

He said an inquiry would be held.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said the capital's hospitals have treated an average of 500 injured every day since this latest round of fighting began.

Between 80 and 100 rockets have rained on the capital daily in the last seven days, destroying houses in most parts of the city.

Column 8

Britain's Queen Mother spends 2nd night in hospital

ABERDEEN, Scotland (AP) — The Queen Mother spent a second night in the hospital Friday following surgery to remove a piece of food which stuck in her throat.

One man returned from hospital with his year-old son, the baby's head bandaged after he was hurt when his home collapsed.

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Rare print of U.S. Declaration of Independence sold

NEW YORK (R) — A rare original print of the declaration of independence was sold privately Friday for an undisclosed price after failing to meet its minimum reserve price at an auction earlier in the day. The broadsheet, one of two still in private hands, was purchased by a rare documents dealer in New Jersey. A spokeswoman said the purchase

was made on behalf of an undisclosed client and she would not

give the purchase price. The document was one of those printed by John Dunlap on the evening of July 4, 1776, to spread the word of Congress's action.

The private transaction was done shortly after bidding at a Sotheby's auction stopped at \$1.75 million, somewhat below the reserve price. Sotheby's had estimated the document would sell for between \$2 million to \$3 million.

A manuscript with some of Abraham Lincoln's strongest indictments of slavery was more successful, selling at the same auction for \$927,500. The one-page manuscript in Lincoln's hand is part of a speech that has been lost. Written around 1858, it says in part that "although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take the good of it, by being a slave himself."

Moon's shadow races over earth in partial eclipse

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sky-watchers from California and Alaska to Finland saw a partial eclipse of the sun Friday as the moon's shadow passed over North America, the Arctic and northern